

CASE PROCESSING STANDARDS ANALYSIS SUMMARY CIVIL MATTERS – SMALL CLAIMS

National Center for State Courts Model Time Standards for Summary Civil Matters:

75% within 60 days
90% within 90 days
98% within 180 Days

Measurement: Filing of initial complaint through disposition (e.g., dismissal, judgment).

Arizona Civil - Small Claims Cases Only

The following standards have been adopted for Small Claims cases:

75% within 100 days
90% within 150 days
98% within 180 Days

Measurement: Filing of initial complaint through disposition (e.g., dismissal, judgment)

Excluded Time: The following may result in a stay of proceedings, and the time elapsed will be excluded from the measurement: bankruptcy and stays granted pursuant to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Arizona Rules and Statutes	Timelines under Statute and Rule
Complaint Filed: Rule 4(a), Rules of Small Claims Procedure (RSCP)	(Measurement Starts Here) A small claims lawsuit starts when a plaintiff files a small claims complaint. The plaintiff must file a complaint in the justice court precinct (“venue”) where the defendant resides or as permitted by the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 22-202.
Answer: ARS § 22-514 Rule 7, RSCP	The defendant must file an answer within 20 days of the date of service.
Continuances and Trial Procedure: ARS § 22-515(C) Rule 12(b), RSCP ARS § 22-516 Rule 12(e), RSCP	Continuances: Continuances of hearings shall be granted only for good cause. Discovery: Parties are not bound by formal rules of procedure, pleading, or evidence, except for statutory provisions relating to privileged communications. Any evidence deemed material, relevant, and competent may be admitted. Additionally, discovery proceedings may not be used in the small claims procedure.
Trial: ARS § 22-515(A) Rule 8, RSCP	Hearing date: On the filing of an answer by the defendant, the clerk shall set the action for hearing. The hearing shall be set for a date within 60 days of the filing of the defendant's answer. The clerk shall notify the parties of the time and place of the hearing.

ARS § 22-518	Jury trials are prohibited in small claims cases.
ARS § 22-520(A) Rule 15(b), RSCP	The judgment by the justice of the peace or hearing officer must be rendered no later than 10 days from the close of the trial. (Measurement Stops Here)